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L E T T E R, &c.



LETTER

FROM A

TO THE

OF THE



GOVERNOR

KNOW NO EVIL SO DESTRUCTIVE TO SOCIETY
AS A LIBRARY

THE SECOND EDITION

Y. T. R. E.

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SUBSCRIBER *to the* YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM,

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TO THE

GOVERNORS *OF THAT* CHARITY.

"I KNOW NO EVIL SO DESTRUCTIVE TO SOCIETY
"AS A LITERARY INCENDIARY."

ADDISON.

THE SECOND EDITION.

Y O R K:

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LETTER

FROM A

STUDENT OF THE NEW YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM

TO THE

GOVERNORS OF THE CHARITY

AND TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SOCIETY

OF THE LUNATIC ASYLUM, NEW YORK

IN REGARD TO THE

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE
AND THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
SOCIETY OF THE LUNATIC ASYLUM, NEW YORK

(NEW YORK: 1854)

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of this Letter has no other motive for its publication, than a sincere desire to give the Public a just and faithful account of the œconomy of the *York Lunatic Asylum*. He sincerely laments that there should exist any persons so evil-minded, as to endeavour to sap the foundation of a most excellent, and rising Charity, from which many distressed families, at this present moment, derive great benefit and comfort.

ADVERTISEMENT

The Author of this Letter has no other
motive for its publication, than a desire
to give the Public a just and full

account of the economy of the law
HAVING for some years past paid a particular
attention to the Government of the York Lunatic
Asylum, I have been enabled to obtain a full
and complete knowledge of its internal
management, and I am now enabled to
communicate to the Public, in a series of
letters, the result of my observations. I have
not only, but I have also, in a series of
letters, published for the purpose of
illustrating the various points of
interest which appear to me to be of
importance in the management of the
Asylum.

From the time that the Asylum was
opened in the middle of the year 1788, the
management has been conducted in a
manner which has attracted the attention
of the public, and has been the subject
of much discussion. I have, therefore,
in the present work, endeavored to give
a full and complete account of the
management of the Asylum, as it is
at present conducted. I have, in the
first place, given a full and complete
account of the various points of interest
which appear to me to be of importance
in the management of the Asylum.
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which appear to me to be of importance
in the management of the Asylum.

A

L E T T E R, &c.

HAVING for some years past paid a particular attention to the Government of the York Lunatic Asylum, I flatter myself that, in the detail of this Letter, I shall be able to lay before you some particulars worthy of your notice: and I the more readily embrace this opportunity, as I find that the Reverend Mr. Mason has lately published some "Animadversions" on the Charity, which appear to me deficient in information, and fallacious in argument.

From the time that the Asylum was opened in 1777, to the middle of the year 1788, the house has received, as I am well informed, all the patients that have offered, without rejecting one application for want of room. But for some months past the applications have been so numerous, that the apothecary has been under the necessity of putting up two beds in many of the rooms, contrary to the usage of the house, and the convenience of the patients. This inconvenience, however, will soon be removed, as the new building, containing twenty-four rooms, will be ready for the reception of patients before the expiration of the present year.

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At this time the Asylum contains sixty-six patients, and these are formed into three divisions. The first division (in number twenty, and never to exceed twenty-five), consists of such patients as are of better condition, who pay a considerable weekly sum for their board and medicines, the surplus of which is employed in lessening the payments of those patients who are in low circumstances, and have no parish relief. The second division (in number twenty-six, of which upwards of one fourth are parish-paupers), consists of those who pay eight shillings per week for their board and medicines; a sum which from experience is found equal to the expence incurred by patients in general. In this division the Governors have included the parish-paupers, judging it unreasonable that parishes should share with the necessitous objects of the third division all the advantages arising from the surplus of the payments made by the patients in affluent circumstances. It surely is sufficient that parish-paupers are taken in at a price equal to what they cost in diet and medicines. *This* was the relief originally intended, and with which the parishes, for the space of four years, were well contented; but as soon as the Governors reduced the weekly payments of those who were in low circumstances, then the parishes, most unjustly and ungenerously, put in their plea for a reduction also, not considering that there was a wide difference between a body of affluent people and a poor individual. To say that parishes will refuse to send their insane poor to a place where they have a chance to be cured, or relieved, *because* they must there pay the *equitable* expence of their board, is a childish idea, and contrary to experience.

The third division (in number twenty) consists of patients in low circumstances who pay for their own board, and have no assistance from their parishes. Those, as I am well informed, are all objects of pitiable distress. They stand thus: Ten at six shillings; Six at five shillings; and Four at four shillings per week. Of

these last, one is the son of an aged widow, whose income is barely sufficient for herself; another is the husband of an industrious woman, who supports herself and one child by the profits of a small shop; the third is the son of a day-labourer, who rents a small cottage and two acres of land; and the fourth is the wife of a poor curate, who has six children: And is the pecuniary distress of a whole parish to be put in competition with that of one such poor person! On this division of distressed individuals the Governors have bestowed the interest of L. 650, given by Lady Gower, Mrs. Bouchier, and Mrs. Bouverie, expressly for "the relief of the most necessitous objects;" and they have also applied to their use part of the overflowings of the first division, as before observed. Without these aids, the poor objects of this division could not have subsisted in the Asylum, it being well known that no part of the general subscription can be applied to the *maintenance* of the patients, until the stock is found to exceed the expence of the buildings, repairs, and furniture. To this the Governors have scrupulously adhered, inasmuch, that from the commencement of the Charity in 1777, to the present hour, no part of the subscribed money has been appropriated to the maintenance of the patients. On the contrary, the patients by weekly payments, proportioned to their abilities, have defrayed the whole expence of the household, and at the same time discharged the wages of the servants and the salary of the apothecary, amounting in the last year to the sum of L. 1200. Some persons have said that they subscribed their money for the maintenance of the *parish*-poor, as well as for the erection and furnishing of the building; but these persons seem to have misconceived the design of the original founders. All the acts of the committee shew, that the *maintenance* of the patients from a public fund, was not a primary, but an eventual object. The following address of the committee, in April 1774, speaks clearly to this point: "Agreeable to the plan of the Medical Committee, a weekly payment of six shillings from the respective parishes, or friends of

“the patients,* will be sufficient to defray all the ex-
 “pences of the household, without the assistance of any
 “fund: So that little more will be required besides a
 “sum adequate to the expence of finishing and furnishing
 “the present building, together with a sum for carrying
 “out the wings, in case the number of patients should
 “increase beyond what can be accommodated and
 “lodged in the body of the house; and of this there is
 “a great probability, if we may judge by the nume-
 “rous applications that have been made from very re-
 “mote distances. But should the subscriptions for-
 “tunately exceed the charge of the necessary buildings
 “and furniture, in that case the overplus money will be
 “converted into a fund for lessening the weekly pay-
 “ments of the patients.” But which of the patients
 were to be deemed the proper objects of this bounty,
 was left to the judgment of the Governors themselves.

At the first opening of the Asylum there was no distinc-
 tion of patients, and *all* paid eight shillings per week for
 their board and medicines; but after a few years it was
 found that this sum was not well-proportioned, as un-
 der this regulation those who were in easy circumstan-
 ces paid too little, and those who were poor, and had no
 parish relief, paid too much. It was therefore ordered,
 for the more extensive service of the public, That persons
 of better condition should be admitted, on their paying
 a weekly sum, proportioned to their circumstances: At
 the same time it was ordered, That the overflowings of
their weekly payments should be applied in aid of those
 persons who were poor and paid for themselves. Under
 this charitable regulation the Asylum continued for the
 space of one year, and the success proved the wisdom of

* This, at a subsequent meeting, was made eight shillings; which, upon
 the supposition that there would be fifty-four patients in the house, made
 an annual income of L. 1123; a sum fully sufficient for all the expences
 of the household, as *publickly* declared and *well* understood at the time.
 The public subscription was therefore clearly intended for “the building
 “and furnishing a house for the *reception*, and not for the *maintenance*, of in-
 “sane persons.” The contrary is asserted, very absurdly, by Mr. Mason.

the measure. But it being observed by the physician, that he was likely to be materially injured by this regulation, however advantageous to the Asylum, as it obliged him to attend, *gratis*, those very persons who would otherwise have been his own private patients, it was ordered, That he should be allowed to take reasonable fees from such affluent patients: And during the time that he has acted under this regulation, I am satisfied that no part of his conduct will be found reprehensible. Some persons have observed, that the Governors should not have made any alteration in their original plan, but have kept all the patients at eight shillings per week. In answer to such suggestions I shall only observe, that whoever considers the powers and circumstances of men, will hold those to be the wisest, *and really the most faithful to the duty which they owe to the public, who make the best use of their experience during their attendance on the public service.*

Progressive improvements have been made in all charities; and the governors of Bethlem and St. Luke, have, in a particular manner, borne their testimony to the rectitude of such measures.

When Bethlem Hospital was erected in 1676, no incurables, and only 67 curables were admitted. But in 1696, the number of the latter was increased to 120, and in 1728 to 138, when, for the first time, three incurables were admitted, which in the following year were increased to 20. At this present time there are 160 curables and 100 incurables.

In the excellent institution of St. Luke's, established in 1751, for incurables, there are at present 120 curables, and only 40 incurables, which last pay five shillings per week for their maintenance. Of this number there are six patients who are paid for by their respective parishes; but by a late regulation, parishes in future are not to receive the benefit of the incurable

fund, it being the intention of the Governors to give the greatest relief to those who are in low circumstances and pay for themselves. And here I beg leave to remark, that this small payment of five shillings is not fully adequate to the expence of one patient, but the deficiency is made up out of the general fund, which at the last audit in 1787, amounted to upwards of L. 100,000. This excellent charity, consisting of poor only, is attended, *gratis*, by Dr. Simmons, who visits several houses of private confinement in the neighbourhood of London, one of which is under his own special direction, where the patients are treated with the utmost tenderness and propriety. In this house the patients pay from one guinea to three guineas and a half per week, exclusive of medicines and physician's fees.

St. Patrick's Hospital in Dublin has a great resemblance to the York Lunatic Asylum. It was originally founded by Dean Swift for the reception and maintenance of *poor* lunatics and idiots, but *now* receives a few patients of *good condition*. In this Hospital 100 insane persons are lodged and boarded, of which number 18 are persons of *good condition*, who pay from thirty to sixty guineas a-year for board and lodging, together with two guineas on admission, and eight guineas annually (each person) to the attending physician. The remaining 80 patients are paupers, and are maintained at the expence of the public fund, which is about L. 1200 a-year. That sum, together with the savings from the patients of better condition, discharges the apothecary's salary, servants' wages, and all the expences of the household.

In the Lunatic Asylum at Manchester, which contains about 70 patients, the payments are from six shillings to one guinea per week for board and medicines, and all above six shillings pay to the physician one guinea on admission, and the like sum when discharged: the rest is left to the generosity of the patient's friends. This is a well-regulated Establishment.

After this cursory review of some of the principal hospitals for the reception of lunatics, I shall now descend to a most material part of our own Institution, and that is the increase of its income from the board of the patients of the first class. It gives me sincere pleasure to inform you, that upon the audit of the third quarter, on the 14th of July last, the Asylum had gained the sum of L. 348, after the apothecary's salary, the servants' wages, and all the expences of the household had been paid. And as the current quarter is likely to equal the last, I dare venture to say, that at the expiration of the four quarters in October next, the saving will be upwards of L. 450. From this sum, L. 200 is, by the order of the last General Court, to be paid to the physician, for this year only, in compensation for his consent that the treasurer should take into the common stock all the fees which he was entitled to receive from the patients in affluent circumstances. The balance then, in favour of the Asylum, will be L. 250; and, it is probable, that a sum equal to this balance will be annually left in the hands of the treasurer, to be applied as the Governors may think proper*.

The Reverend Mr. Mason, in the "*Animadversions*" alluded to, has taken much pains to prove that the insane parish-poor were *originally* intended to be *relieved* by the Lunatic Asylum. No person that I know of ever denied the position. All the public advertisements declare it. But *the* relief intended, and publicly given out, was, That they, and such insane persons as were in low circumstances, should be lodged in the Asylum, and supplied with board and medicines at the rate of eight shillings per week, each person. That

* By way of experiment the physician's fees (for this year only) were converted into a salary of L. 200, in order that the Governors might know exactly the profits that arise from the patients of better condition. They are now in possession of that knowledge; so that at a future day they may, if they see occasion, fix a salary upon the attending physician, in the room of optional fees. For what regards the salary, see the APPENDIX, N^o I.

relief they *have* had, and *continue* to have*. I know of no title that parishes can have to any further relief from this Charity. Upon the reduction-fund they can have no possible claim, as no part of it belongs to the original subscription. It is independent of the subscription, being the bounty of Lady Gower, Mrs. Bourchier, and Mrs. Bouverie, for the express purpose of granting relief, at the discretion of the Governors, to such insane persons as are in low circumstances, but on no account to be employed in the building. To this fund, which produces L. 35 annually, is added about L. 200 more, being the annual surplus of the payments of those patients who are in affluent circumstances, after discharging their board, medicines, and medical attendance. Mr. Mason has totally mistaken the nature of the government of the Lunatic Asylum. As, on the reduction-fund, parishes have not the shadow of a claim, neither are they entitled to any thing from the general subscription, as the treasurer has only in bank about L. 1200, which is set apart for defraying the expence of the present additional building, together with L. 1300, the interest of which is under a perpetual appropriation to the repairs of the house and furniture. Every expence of the household is defrayed by the patients themselves, agreeably to the *original* constitution, by payments proportioned to their abilities; and I beg leave to repeat, that from the beginning of the Institution to the present hour, there never has been one farthing of the subscription-money appropriated by the Governors either to the maintenance of the patients, the attendance of the physician, the salary of the apothecary, or the wages of the servants. The whole public money, consequently, remains with the Hospital estate. If Mr. Mason could make it appear that the insane parish-poor can be maintained in the Asylum for less than eight shillings weekly, he would in that case have a reasonable plea for a reduction of their pay-

* When the Asylum was first established, parishes paid for their insane paupers confined at Bramham, the sum of ten guineas for the first quarter, and half a guinea per week ever after.

ments; but till then, his pamphlet will be considered as the indication of something not perfectly right in the temper of its author, and will add but little to his honourable reputation.

Had Mr. Mason informed himself of the real state of the Asylum, I am satisfied that he would not have published "Animadversions" against, but in favour of that Charity. Independent of the relief given to the parish-poor and persons in low circumstances, the benefits are great to those few who are in easy circumstances. The payments made by them are moderate, and always suited to the circumstances of their families. The expences of no patient exceed L. 1:4s per week; for which moderate sum they have hitherto been provided with meat, drink, washing, lodging, medicines, and *medical attendance*. Parishes pay eight shillings for their insane poor, and persons in low circumstances, who pay for themselves, are received as low as *four* shillings per week. Here is a benevolent and rising charity which Mr. Mason has greatly injured!

It would be abusing the patience of my readers was I to record all the misrepresentations and unfair reasoning inserted in Mr. Mason's "Animadversions." One, however, I cannot let pass, as it has materially operated to the disadvantage of the Asylum, and consequently has answered the end of its author. He says, "And yet, when to discourage the lower kind of private madhouses was here declared to be the purpose of this Institution, it may not be amiss to note, that only two years after, about the end of 1784, a certain person, by name Matthew Wilcoxon, was discharged the house, in which he had for about eight years been a most useful servant. This respectable old man had, for many years before, been in that way of business; he had seen much of the practice of Bethlem-Hospital, had acted under Dr. Monro, and was possessor of many of his prescriptions, and for his competent skill, at least in common cases, and still

“ more for his great care and humanity, was patronized
 “ by Dr. Dealtry himself, who constantly recommended
 “ him, when lunatic cases came before him, even to
 “ persons of condition. When the Asylum was nearly
 “ finished, this man was consulted concerning it, and,
 “ after rectifying many mistakes in the building,
 “ brought his own patients into it, and, relinquishing
 “ his own private house, became principal manager,
 “ keeper, nay, and apothecary too (at least occasionally),
 “ for the small annual salary of L. 40. Yet, at or about
 “ this very time, he was dismissed; and how dismissed?
 “ With a pension of L. 20 *per annum* for life, and with
 “ leave to take with him such of his own patients as
 “ then remained in the house. He is now in his 77th
 “ year, but in the full vigour of all his faculties, and ex-
 “ cept a natural diminution of bodily strength, as com-
 “ petent to superintend such an hospital as ever. He
 “ still, in the suburbs of York, keeps a few patients, as
 “ many as his neat but small cottage will permit him to
 “ keep, and in the greatest order and decency. Many
 “ remarks might be made on this anecdote, but I only
 “ propose this single question: Was his dismissal the
 “ best way of discouraging private madhouses?”

That Mr. Wilcoxon acted in Bethlem-Hospital as a
 servant I allow; but that his being in possession of some
 of Dr. Monro's prescriptions would make him a phy-
 sician, is what no man in his senses will admit. Mr.
 Mason asserts, that Mr. Wilcoxon brought his *patients*
 into the Asylum when he first engaged as a servant there;
 but he has artfully concealed the numbers. This is
 a story that has “magic in the web of it!” One patient
 Mr. Wilcoxon certainly brought in; and one patient
 he as certainly took out; and it is as certain, that Mr.
 Wilcoxon told Mr. Mason so in March last.

In the pamphlet alluded to, Mr. Mason has feelingly
 described the case of one Henry Shaw, at present a pa-
 tient in the Asylum, at the reduced price of six shil-
 lings per week. This young man, he tells us, has al-

ready cost him L. 120;—a considerable sum indeed! but sufficiently repaid by the pleasure of telling the story. Should Mr. Mason continue to complain of this great burthen, he must expect to be told, that the Asylum bears its proportionable part; for the Society loses *five pounds* annually by every person kept by them at six shillings per week. When this loss is fairly calculated, Mr. Mason will find himself in honour, not to say in justice, indebted to the Asylum in a sum something above his original subscription of L. 21. Probably Mr. Mason, in the next edition of his "*Animadversions*," may say something in favour of another of his *Eleves*, who is also a patient in the Asylum; but such a recommendation will be needless, as the relations of the young man do not object to the moderate price of eight shillings per week for his board and medicines.

Mr. Mason, in the 22d page of his "*Animadversions*," charges the Governors with the "inordinate waste" of the public money in the purchase of the land on which the Asylum now stands; asserting, in a *note*, that land which lay conveniently near the County Infirmary, might have been purchased at a much cheaper rate. These are heavy charges indeed, as they go to impeach the integrity of many respectable characters. Now, in direct opposition to Mr. Mason's charges, I pledge myself to prove, that the committee used their most strenuous endeavours to purchase land in the neighbourhood of the County Infirmary; and also, that they never had the slightest intimation or knowledge of any land in the neighbourhood of the Infirmary, that might have been purchased for less money, by the acre, than what they gave for the land on which the Asylum now stands. What comes within my knowledge is, That soon after the first general meeting of the subscribers to the Asylum, the committee did apply to the acting managers of the County Infirmary, for the purchase of all, or part, of a field, lying immediately behind the Infirmary; but their application re-

ceived a direct negative. Still anxious to have ground in the neighbourhood of the County Infirmary, they applied to the late Mr. Yoward for two acres of land, which lay directly opposite the Infirmary, and for which the unreasonable sum of L. 600 was demanded.

About this time Dr. Hunter (as I am well informed) had some conversation with the late Mr. Jubb, about a small field, situated near the Groves, and not at an inconvenient distance from the Infirmary; but was told by him, That, however well-disposed to serve the Asylum (and a warm friend to it he was), he could not at that time part with this field, as its conveniences were absolutely necessary to him.

Now, I call upon Mr. Mason to declare, whether, when he wrote his "Animadversions," he knew of any of these transactions.—If he did, his *note* in the 22d page of his pamphlet, does him no credit*. If he declare his ignorance, I will take upon me to prove, That he himself was upon the Committee when an order was made to enquire after two acres of land *opposite* the County Infirmary; which order was carried into execution on the following day.

I shall pass over in silence the many low and illiberal attacks made by Mr. Mason upon the constitution of the Asylum, the honour of its Governors, and, in particular, upon the attending physician. The prosperity of the Asylum falsifies his assertions, and the well-known character of its Governors defends them sufficiently against the petulant attacks of a man so little qualified to direct public business.

August 22, 1788.

* Mr. Mason says, "The situation chosen was still more objectionable than any other of those original errors: Ground, I am well informed, might have been purchased, which lay conveniently near the County Infirmary, at a much cheaper rate than was given for that on which the Asylum now stands. Proximity of place was surely devoutly to be wished with regard to the two buildings." Page 22.

AT A

GENERAL COURT OF GOVERNORS,

Held at the ASYLUM, August 23, 1788,

His GRACE the ARCHBISHOP of YORK in the Chair.

RESOLVED, **T**HAT whereas L. 35 a-year, arising from the interest upon three separate sums, given by the late Countess Dowager Gower, Mrs. Bouchier, and Mrs. Bouverie, is, as yet, the only fund appropriated to the relief and maintenance of the patients in this Asylum, a weekly payment, which was of necessity exacted of every patient at the period of its first institution, continues to be necessary still: And whereas persons of every condition, as well those in easy circumstances as those in the most necessitous, are admitted into this Asylum, to partake the benefits of commodious habitation, and of the great ease, good order, and excellent medical assistance given here; it was resolved that the patients should be formed into classes, according to their respective fortunes, and that those of the superior or opulent class should pay, according to their abilities, certain weekly rates, exceeding the expence of their maintenance, thereby creating the means of relieving the class of the necessitous, by lowering *their* weekly payments, to a rate more suitable to their circumstances, though not adequate to the expence of their maintenance.

This court, upon a full and serious reconsideration of the principle of that resolution, and upon the experience of the effect produced by the regulation, does now confirm it, and does also confirm the rule whereby patients sent into this Asylum by parish-officers, and, according to the strict injunction of the law, maintained at the charge of their respective parishes, are rated at 8s. per week each, this being the computed average expence of maintaining each patient; the court being clearly of opinion that whenever the means arise, it is more in the true spirit of charity, that those means should be applied to the relief of necessitous individuals, than to the ease and accommodation of the opulent proprietors and inhabitants of a parish, under whatever specious description it may be thought proper to mask their case.

And whereas the court having considered, that it was unfit and unjust, that patients in easy and affluent circumstances should, equally with the necessitous and indigent, enjoy the gratuitous assistance of the attending physician, did resolve, August 26, 1785, to request the physician to accept, from patients of the former description, the reasonable emoluments of his profession: And whereas by a subsequent resolution of August 24, 1787, the court did request the physician, to accept a salary of L. 200 for the ensuing year, in lieu of fees from patients of the superior class; this court, upon a serious and deliberate review of this last-mentioned resolution, determines not to renew it at this period, but requests the physician henceforth to receive such moderate and reasonable fees from the class of affluent patients as he was accustomed to receive heretofore.

RESOLVED, That the thanks of this court be given to Dr. Hunter, the physician, for his great attention to all the interests of this Institution, especially for his assiduous care and successful treatment of the patients, and particularly, at this time, for the disinterestedness

of his whole conduct from the first establishment of the Asylum to the present day.

RESOLVED, That the Governors present rely upon the candour of all the subscribers, to give credit to their assurances, that no sinister motives ever have influenced, or ever can influence their conduct. They trust that all the regulations they have established, and the whole œconomy of the Institution, have merited the approbation of every subscriber; and they hope that all will agree with them in opinion, that such Governors as profess themselves friends to the Asylum would express their good-will to it much better by attending in their places at the times of meeting, and there giving their advice for the regulation and improvement of the Institution, than by prejudicing the minds of the public by their misrepresentations.

MICHAEL EASTBURN, Secretary.

STATE OF THE ASYLUM.

ON the 1st day of January, 1777, the house was opened for the reception of patients, since which time to the 17th day of August, 1788, 514 insane persons have been admitted.

Admitted since the beginning	- - - - -	514
Cured	- - - - -	239
Relieved	- - - - -	126
Incurable, and removed by desire of their friends		45
Died	- - - - -	36
Remain in the house, 34 men and 34 women		68
		— 514

WILLIAM PRESTON, *Treasurer*,
A. HUNTER, *Physician*.
MICHAEL EASTBURN, *Apothecary*.

RESOLUTIONS AND ORDERS.

RESOLVED, That this Charity shall receive all persons labouring under an unsound mind, whether curable or not.

ORDERED, That all the patients in the house, and such as may hereafter be received, shall be classed by the *Visitors* according to their respective circumstances:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| CLASS 1. Six shillings per week. | CLASS 5. Fourteen shillings per week. |
| — 2. Eight shillings. | — 6. Sixteen shillings. |
| — 3. Ten shillings. | — 7. Eighteen shillings. |
| — 4. Twelve shillings. | — 8. Twenty shillings & upwards. |

N. B. The above payments discharge board, lodging, tea, washing, and medicines.

ORDERED, That a separate table be kept for such patients as are rated above eight shillings per week; with the privilege of being admitted without certificates.

RESOLVED, That patients of the higher classes may be waited on by their own servants, paying six shillings per week for their board and washing.

RESOLVED, That women with child, labouring under an unsound mind, shall be received, upon security being given that the child shall not become burthensome to the parish in which the Asylum stands.

ORDERED, That, in cases of sudden lunacy, patients will be received into the house without previous notice, if presented before sun-set: But, in all other cases, it is expected, that notice be sent to the Apothecary at the Asylum a few days before the arrival of the patient, that every thing may be properly prepared for his, or her, reception.

RESOLVED, That lunatics, coming recommended as parish-poor, shall be placed in the second class, *except upon extraordinary occasions*; it being the intention of this institution to give the greatest relief to such persons as are in low and distressed circumstances, and who do not receive relief from their respective parishes.

RESOLVED, That it would be *convenient* to the Public, as well as *advantageous* to the Asylum, if patients in affluent circumstances were admitted.

ORDERED, That twenty-five patients of the above description shall in future be admitted, on their paying a suitable pension to the Asylum; but it is understood that such patients shall pay reasonable fees to the physician for his attendance.

ORDERED, That the physician do attend, *gratis*, all

patients whose payments do not exceed eight shillings per week.

RESOLVED, That a donation of twenty pounds, or upwards, shall constitute a Governor, with the privilege of recommending as many patients as he may think proper.

ORDERED, That the weekly payments of the first class of patients be lowered one shilling, or more, at the discretion of the Visitors.

MICHAEL EASTBURN, Secretary.

****** The Governors wish to have it understood, that this Charity is intended to lessen the number of private mad-houses, by affording a comfortable retreat to a numerous body of unhappy sufferers, at a price proportioned to their abilities; and as twenty additional rooms, with suitable offices, are nearly finished, donations for the purpose of defraying that expence will be received by Messrs Garforth and Co. Messrs Crompton and Co. bankers in York; and by Messrs Martin and Co. Messrs Boldero, Kendal, and Co. bankers in London.

A P P E N D I X.

No. I.

A LETTER *from* DR. HUNTER *to the* GOVERNORS *of the* LUNATIC ASYLUM.

GENTLEMEN,

York, August 24. 1787.

AT the request of several of the Governors of the Lunatic Asylum, I here give a few thoughts on that Charity; and as they are the result of nine years attention, I flatter myself that they will be of use, in case of my death, or resignation,

In the first place, I am convinced that at no time, the payments from the parish-poor should be reduced, as under such an alteration the house would be immediately, and most pressingly, filled with the lowest and meanest of the poor, to the exclusion of those of a middling rank and in low circumstances, for whom the Asylum was principally constructed and its government planned. The Institution has already reduced the number of many miserable persons kept in places of private confinement: and has been fortunate in restoring many such objects to their friends, in bodily health, and in sound mind, without any material injury to their fortunes. This I have ever considered as the spirit of the Institution, and I have invariably conducted it upon that plan. During my attendance on the Asylum, I have studied to make the payments of the patients as

advantageous as possible to the Charity; but my successor may not be willing, or able, to make such a sacrifice. I therefore recommend that a salary should be given to the attending physician in the room of fees; and which, I think, should not be less than L. 200 *per annum*. This will attach him to the Asylum, and prevent his establishing a private house of confinement, which would evidently counteract the design of the original foundation of the Asylum.

At the same time, the salary of the apothecary should be raised to L. 100 *per annum*, which will secure to the house the attendance of a judicious and regular person in one of the most important departments of the Asylum.

The physician's salary being fixed, all fees from persons of *superior condition* will cease, and the full amount of the fees and pensions be paid into the hands of the steward for the use of the Charity.

As I apprehend that at some time the Asylum must be under such a regulation, would it not be well to try the experiment at present?

If the Governors approve, I shall willingly make the trial, for one year, in my own person, with this assurance, that I will remit the whole, or any part of the salary, in case the payments from the patients should not exceed the expences of the house, under which all kinds of provisions, apothecary's salary, and servants' wages are comprehended.

The incidental expences will naturally be provided for by the interest of money already in the funds. Under the article, Incidental Expences, are comprehended bad debts, and wear of bedding and furniture.

Taking fees, at the discretion of the attending phyfi-

cian, from patients of better condition, may at a future period be attended with bad consequences; it is on that account that I recommend a salary in preference to the mode at present practised, and recommended at the General Court held in August, 1785.

The sum of the whole is this:

First, As the house was built and furnished by the public for the reception of lunatics of different denominations, so it ought to be kept furnished and repaired at the expence of the public fund.

Secondly, As the public fund was never considered to extend beyond this idea, the whole expence regarding the board of the patients, together with medicines, salaries, and servants wages, must be defrayed by the patients themselves, or their friends, by weekly payments proportioned to their respective abilities. I am,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

A. HUNTER.

GENTLEMEN,

York, Jan. 5. 1788.

SINCE writing the foregoing letter, I have most anxiously and seriously reconsidered the subject of it; and I now sit down to write this, in confidence that the general idea there exhibited, is as well founded as it is honestly intended. I am confident that to reduce the payments made by parishes for their insane poor, would open a door for the entrance of all the idiots, bed-ridden, diseased, and incurable mad paupers in the kingdom, to the certain exclusion of those in low circumstances, or of a middling rank in life; to whom the York Lunatic Asylum has been a charity indeed! At the Annual General Court in 1784, when persons of low condition were reduced in their weekly payments, it was ordered, That a few patients of better condition should be admitted, that *their* enlarged payments might make up for the deficiency occasioned by the reduction of the *others*. This, though a humane idea, was in some degree not quite equitable: It, however, to the great benefit of the Asylum, continued for the space of one year, without any complaint on my part. At the succeeding General Annual Court, it was ordered, That the attending physician should receive moderate fees from the affluent patients, it being judged unreasonable that he should give his attendance *gratis* to persons in easy circumstances, and, in general, by himself recommended to the Asylum, in preference to their being under his own care in a place of private confinement*.

* At a General Court held at the Asylum, August 24. 1785. Present, his Grace the Archbishop of York, the Right Hon. Earl Fitzwilliam, Wm. Preston, Esq; Henry Jubb, Esq; H. Myres, Esq; Wm. Withers, Esq; Timothy Mortimer, Esq;

Ordered, " That when any patients of better condition offer themselves to the Asylum, they be admitted upon the rate of payment which may be deemed adequate to their circumstances; and that Dr. Hunter, to whom the Governors think themselves obliged for his liberal, disinterested,

Hitherto, these fees have been moderate indeed; and as long as I give my attendance at the Asylum they shall continue so. But as I do not approve of a discretionary power of that nature being in the hands of any man, I recommended in my former letter, that, at a future day, a certain annual sum should be paid to the physician, in lue of fees. In return for the abolition of fees, I advised, that the payments of the affluent patients should be increased for the benefit of the general fund. Under this idea, the affluent patients will have to pay, upon the whole, no more than they formerly did; it only varies the mode of payment: And, from the fund thus constituted, I recommended an equitable and determinate sum to be taken, and given to the physician for his care and attention, in the room of the fees taken *from him and incorporated* with the general fund of the Charity, as before mentioned. The benefits likely to arise from this alteration are too obvious to be mentioned. At the expiration of every year, I expect, there will be a surplus to be added to the charitable fund created by the bounties of Lady Gower and Mrs. Bourchier, "for the maintenance of the patients," at the discretion of the Governors. The extent of that surplus can be known only from the result of the trial now making: And if I may venture to form an opinion from what appeared at the last audit, a few days ago, there will be derived from the patients of better condition a sum so much more than sufficient to pay the physician's salary, as to leave what will balance, and even more than balance, the deminution of income occasioned by the charitable reduction made in favour of those who are in low circumstances. Those of that description in the present calendar, as far as I know, are all objects of pitiable distress. They stand thus: Twelve at 6s.—five at 5s.—and three at 4s. per week. Of these last, one is a son

and charitable attendance upon the necessitous objects of the Charity, may be requested to do justice to his own interest, by receiving from the friends of such patients the reasonable emoluments of his profession.

(Signed)

W. EBOR."

of an aged widow, whose income is barely sufficient for herself; another is the husband of an industrious woman, who supports herself and one child by the profits of a small shop; and the third is the wife of a poor curate, who has six children. And is the *pecuniary* distress of a parish to be put in competition with one of those poor persons; God forbid! For the above small payments, the patients have meat, drink, washing, lodging, medicines, and medical attendance: and it is well known, that the medicines *alone* taken in one week, have often exceeded the payments of a fortnight: I mean, when musk has been occasionally required. The charitable spirit of a man revolts when those sufferers are to have *their* expences increased, because *parish-payments* are to be reduced. It is a just principle, that the greatest relief should be given where there is the greatest want of it; and I apprehended that no considerate person will hesitate a moment in determining where, in the present case, the relief ought to be applied. Should the fund of the Asylum increase much beyond its expenditure, then let parishes be relieved; but, till then, let the real poor experience the full effects of this Charity.

It gives me pain to be under the necessity of saying so much upon the present subject; but a sincere desire to preserve the Asylum from a ruinous innovation, the reduction of parish-payments, has prompted me to give you this trouble. I am,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

A. HUNTER.

P. S. To prevent any false representations, it will be proper to observe, that parish-poor, by the constitution of the Asylum, are fixed at 8s. per week, for which sum they are supplied with board, washing, medicines,

and medical attendance. It is calculated, that insane persons at 8s. per week, fully consume that sum in board, medicines, &c. And as there have been for some time past upwards of twenty patients at weekly payments considerably under that sum, it is evident that their diminished payments must have been made up by the superior payments of the affluent patients; it being a fact, that the house, from the beginning, has maintained its own establishment, without the aid of one shilling from the capital fund: All the public money, consequently remains with the Hospital estate.

A. HUNTER



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